

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 TRSE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 AID-05 CEA-01 COME-00

EB-08 FRB-03 STR-06 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 DOE-11

SOE-02 /125 W

-----049276 270813Z /11

R 261925Z JAN 78

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4510

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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USEEC

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PORC, EGEN, EAID, UN, EEC

SUBJECT: UN OVERVIEW: FIRST MEETING FEBRUARY 13, 1978

REF: STATE 17255

1. SUMMARY: THE EC COMMISSION BELIEVES US VIEWS ON THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE ARE GENERALLY IN LINE WITH THOSE BEING PROPOSED FOR A COMMON EC POSITION, WITH THE MAJOR EXCEPTION THAT THE COMMISSION IS RECOMMENDING AGAINST ESTABLISHING A LIMITED MEMBERSHIP STEERING GROUP. THE COMMISSION IS ALSO SUGGESTING A SINGLE ROTATING CHAIRMAN
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OF THE COMMITTEE. IT IS ATTACHING IMPORTANCE TO THE COMMITTEE AND WILL USUALLY BE REPRESENTED AT ITS MEETINGS AT THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL LEVEL. IT BELIEVES THE COMMITTEE SHOULD OPERATE AS INFORMALLY AS POSSIBLE, AND THAT SUBJECTS ON ITS AGENDA SHOULD BE QUITE BROAD. THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE COMMISSION BELIEVES THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE SHOULD CONSIDER ENERGY AND OTHER SUBJECTS OF

INTEREST TO GROUP-B IS NOT CLEAR, HOWEVER. COREPER IS EXPECTED TO APPROVE GENERAL EC GUIDELINES FOR THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE IN EARLY FEBRUARY. END SUMMARY.

2. AS INSTRUCTED REFTEL, MISSION OFFICER ON JANUARY 25 INFORMED EC COMMISSION (ODILE QUINTIN, ASSISTANT TO DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS CASPARI ON NORTH-SOUTH MATTERS) OF US VIEWS REGARDING THE FIRST MEETING OF THE UN OVERVIEW COMMITTEE, FEBRUARY 13. HE LEFT A "NON-PAPER" MAKING THE PRINCIPAL POINTS IN REFTEL WHICH MADAME QUINTIN PROMISED TO BRING TO THE ATTENTION OF CASPARI, WHO HAS BEEN TIED UP WITH STEEL NEGOTIATIONS. SHE SAID RECEIPT OF US VIEWS WAS MOST TIMELY SINCE THE FULL EC COMMISSION WAS CONSIDERING THE SAME DAY ITS POSITION PAPER ON NORTH-SOUTH ISSUES TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE EC COUNCIL.

3. QUINTIN SAID THAT THE US PAPER REFLECTS VIEWS IDENTICAL OR VERY SIMILAR TO THOSE RECOMMENDED BY THE COMMISSION STAFF IN MOST RESPECTS. THE MOST IMPORTANT DIFFERENCE IS THE COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATION AGAINST THE CREATION OF A "SUBSTANTIVE STEERING GROUP". THE COMMISSION AND MOST MEMBER STATES, SHE SAID, FEAR THAT THIS PROPOSAL WOULD CREATE A NEW CIEC BUT WITH THE ADDED DISADVANTAGE OF BEING LOCATED IN THE UN SYSTEM. SHE REPEATED EARLIER ARGUMENTS THAT THE CIEC EXPERIENCE HAS CONFIDENTIAL

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DEMONSTRATED THAT BECAUSE OF INTERNAL DIFFERENCES AND FRICTION, WHEN THE G-77 AUTHORIZES SOME OF ITS MEMBERS TO REPRESENT IT, THEY HAVE VIRTUALLY NO FLEXIBILITY TO DEPART FROM OR MODIFY THE MANDATE THEY HAVE BEEN GIVEN BY THE G-77. SHE ADMITTED THAT THE EC WOULD HAVE A PROBLEM IN DECIDING WHO WOULD REPRESENT IT IN SUCH A RESTRICTED GROUP, BUT FELT THAT THE PROBLEMS FACING THE G-77 IN SELECTING ITS REPRESENTATIVES WOULD BE EVEN MORE ACUTE. SHE FELT THAT IN PRACTICE, THE WORK OF THE OVERVIEW WOULD BE CONDUCTED ON AN INFORMAL BASIS BY ONLY A FEW STATES WHO COULD BE DESCRIBED AS "FRIENDS OF THE PRESIDENT".

4. SHE SAID THE COMMISSION AGREED WITH THE US VIEWS AS TO THE GENERAL OBJECTIVES THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE SHOULD SERVE AND THE OVERALL APPROACH IT SHOULD TAKE. THE COMMISSION AGREES THAT THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE SHOULD BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY, BUT FEELS THAT IT SHOULD BE KEPT AS INFORMAL AS POSSIBLE. SHE SAID THAT NORMALLY DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS CASPARI WOULD ATTEND COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THE COMMISSION BUT WAS NOT CERTAIN WHETHER HE COULD ATTEND THE FEBRUARY 13

ORGANIZING MEETING.

5. QUINTIN SAID THE COMMISSION ALSO AGREED ON THE DESIRABILITY OF A SINGLE CHAIRMAN, BUT FELT AGREEMENT MIGHT BE FACILITATED IF THE CHAIRMANSHIP WOULD BE ROTATED PERIODICALLY BETWEEN HIGH-QUALITY CANDIDATES FROM DIFFERENT GROUPS. THE COMMISSION ALSO OPPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF FORMAL WORKING GROUPS ON BROAD CATEGORIES OF ISSUES, BUT WOULD ACCEPT CREATION OF INFORMAL GROUPS ON SPECIFIC TOPICS ON AN AD HOC BASIS.

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6. SINCE THE COMMISSION BELIEVED IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT A STEERING GROUP WOULD BE ACCEPTED, QUINTIN FELT THE FULL OVERVIEW COMMITTEE WOULD HAVE TO MEET MORE FREQUENTLY THAN ENVISAGED BY THE UNITED STATES, BUT CERTAINLY NOT EIGHT MEETINGS A YEAR AS SUGGESTED BY THE G-77.

7. QUINTIN SAID THE COMMISSION PROPOSAL DOES NOT GO INTO AS MUCH DETAIL ON THE AGENDA AS THE US VIEWS. SHE AGREED THAT THE AGENDA SHOULD BE KEPT AS BROAD AS POSSIBLE, BUT NOTED THAT THE COMMISSION'S GROUPING OF SUB-

ITEMS INTO BROAD CATEGORIES IS SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT FROM THE UNITED STATES PROPOSAL. REGARDING THE DESIRED INTRODUCTION OF ITEMS OF INTEREST TO GROUP-B, THE COMMISSION PROPOSAL DOWN-PLAYED "BASIC HUMAN NEEDS" AND GROUPED CONFIDENTIAL

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INVESTMENT AND INDUSTRIALIZATION TOGETHER. REGARDING ENERGY, QUINTIN SAID THE COMMISSION FELT IT MIGHT BE BETTER TO LIMIT CONSIDERATION OF ENERGY IN THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE TO CONSIDERATION AS TO WHERE AND HOW A DIALOGUE ON ENERGY COULD TAKE PLACE RATHER THAN TO TRY TO DISCUSS THE SUBSTANCE OF ENERGY. (COMMENT: WE SUSPECT THAT POSSIBLE EXTENSION OF THE AGENDA TO INCLUDE SUBJECTS OF INTEREST TO GROUP-B MAY NOT HAVE BEEN SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED BY THE COMMISSION, AND THAT A MORE FORTHCOMING REACTION MAY BE POSSIBLE WHEN THE COMMISSION GETS A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE US SUGGESTION.)

8. QUINTIN SAID THAT THE COMMISSION HAD NOT ADDRESSED SUCH DETAILS AS PREPARATION OF PAPERS FOR THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE OR THE POSSIBILITY OF HOLDING MEETINGS OUTSIDE UN HEADQUARTERS, BUT FELT THAT THE US POSITION ON BOTH POINTS APPEARED REASONABLE.

9. QUINTIN SAID THAT HER REACTIONS TO US VIEWS COULD BE TAKEN AS REPRESENTING THE EC COMMISSION SINCE THEY WERE BASED ON A PREPARED POSITION. SHE PROMISED TO INFORM THE MISSION IF COMMISSION OFFICIALS HAD ANY FURTHER COMMENTS ON THE US PAPER OR IF THE FULL COMMISSION IN ITS MEETING OF JANUARY 25 MADE ANY UNEXPECTED ADDITIONS OR CHANGES IN THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AN EC POSITION ON THE OVERVIEW MECHANISM. QUINTIN SAID THAT AFTER CONSIDERATION BY THE COUNCIL'S NORTH-SOUTH WORKING GROUP (FORMERLY THE DENIS GROUP) ON JANUARY 31, COREPER WOULD PROBABLY APPROVE GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE MEMBER STATES FOR THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE. FURTHER COORDINATION OF THE POSITION OF THE EC-9, SHE SAID, WOULD TAKE PLACE IN NEW YORK UNDER THE DANISH PRESIDENCY. HINTON

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Message Attributes

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